THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Punjab National Bank has reported that it has received 199 applications during the year 2001 for appointment of the dependants of the deceased employees on compassionate grounds from all the 12 zones including 8 applications of Bhopal Zone.

(b) The above applications have been examined in terms of the extant scheme of the bank for providing employment on compassionate grounds. Out of 199 applications, 72 applications (including 3 of Bhopal Zone) have been approved and 102 applications have been declined. There is no delay in considering the applications seeking employment on compassionate grounds. However, delay, if any, is on account of non-provision of requisite details by the applicants. The applications are decided generally in 3-4 months' time.

(c) The bank has further reported that remaining 25 applications will be decided immediately after receipt of requisite details from the applicants.

Evasion of Customs Duty by M/s Frontier Trading

74. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "How a mattress scam was massaged" which appeared in the Pioneer, New Delhi on 25th January, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the details of evasion of customs duty on Magnetic Acupressure Treatment System imported by Mumbai-based Company M/s Frontier Trading; and

(c) the steps Government have taken or propose to take to recover the duty from the above Mumbai-based company and take appropriate action against the proprietors under the Customs Act, 1962?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A case of import of magnetic mattresses, quilts and pillows called Magnetic Acupressure Treatment Instrument was adjudicated by Commissioner of Customs, Mumbai *vide* an order, dated 31.08.2001, holding that the goods are classifiable as 'mattresses' under heading 9404.29 of the Customs Tariff.

The matter was subsequently examined by Government and it was found that the goods are appropriately classifiable under heading 9019.10 as 'massage apparatus'. Accordingly, a Circular was issued to this effect on 25.10.2001 so as to bring about uniformity in the assessment practice of the goods.

Against the order of the Commissioner of Customs, the importer filed an appeal before the CEGAT with an application for grant of stay. The stay has been granted by the hon'ble Tribunal.

Show-cause notice to M/s United Breweries Group

75. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 215 given in the Rajya Sabha on 20th November, 2001 and state:

(a) the outcome of the show-cause notice issued to M/s United Breweries Limited and its Chairman for violation of Sections 8(1), 9(1)(c), 47(1) and (2) of FERA, 1973; and

(b) whether any personal hearing has been given to M/s United Breweries Limited and its Chairman in the matter, if so, the details and results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The show-cause notice issued to M/s United Breweries Limited and its Chairman for violation of Sections 8(1), 9(1)(c), 47(1) and (2) of FERA has been adjudicated by the Special Director Enforcement